

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING
MINUTES

Tuesday, January 23, 2024
(Approved 2/13/24)

The meeting was called to order by Stephen Pilcher at 7:01 pm.

Members in attendance: Stephen Pilcher (chair), Paul Low, John McNerney, Marikate Kelley, Walter Crandall

Members absent: none

Others in attendance: Jessica Demeritt (recording secretary), Stan Wilbur (town administrator), Randy Charbonneau, John Zaikowski, Shane Lawrence, Debra Sprague

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

S. Pilcher said the town website was down for parts of last week and he apologized. It is back up and working.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

APPROVE MINUTES

W. Crandall moved to approve the minutes of January 9, 2024 as written. J. McNerney seconded. All voted in favor.

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

W. Crandall moved to approve AP 40108 in the amount of \$150,000. M.

Kelley seconded. It was noted that the payment is coming from the ARPA fund for the MVFD. **All voted in favor.**

W. Crandall moved to approve PR 40112 in the amount of \$13,681.62. M.

Kelley seconded. All voted in favor.

W. Crandall moved to approve AP 40115 in the amount of \$78,438.37. M.

Kelley seconded. All voted in favor.

REVIEW AND APPROVE OVERWEIGHT PERMITS, ETC

The following overweight permits were reviewed and approved:

Newport Sand and Gravel / Carroll Concrete

G. Stone Commercial Division

FACILITY USE REQUEST

P. Low said there were two. There was discussion about how to reserve the community room. P. Low said he appreciated people checking the calendar when making requests.

PUBLIC COMMENT

R. Charbonneau, town auditor, requested access to all reports on NEMRC. There was discussion about waiving the homestead declaration and changing the delinquent tax rate. The auditors asked on what authority the Selectboard waived the 8% fee for late taxes in the 9/14/20 Selectboard meeting. S. Pilcher and M. Kelley indicated that this was authorized by the state legislature under S.344 in 2020 as temporary Covid relief.

NEW BUSINESS:

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT STATUS UPDATE

S. Lawrence said the crew was doing a lot of tree and brush removal to help prevent damage in future. He said truck maintenance was ongoing with one truck waiting for parts that will be done by the end of week. S. Lawrence noted that ACRPC did a culvert review. He has been going through the review and planning for the upcoming season. S. Pilcher checked in on the performance review. He said he would get it under way. W. Crandall asked about a truck going down and how to determine who fixes it. S. Lawrence said they try to do a lot of things in house because it's cheaper and more timely. S. Lawrence said trainings would begin in springtime. S. Pilcher asked about the bluetooth data from the digital speed sign. The new signs are here and will be installed when the ground thaws. There was discussion about where they could be installed. W. Crandall asked about sand and salt.

2024 BUDGET

S. Pilcher asked about the recreation department fund and what the plans were for it. J. Zaikowski said the fund was created in the 1990s from a fundraiser to create an indoor rec facility. The fundraiser wasn't sufficient to build the facility. Eventually the money was determined to be allowable for use to pay for infrastructure: the dugouts, the pavilion at Morse Park. S. Pilcher wanted to understand what those monies could be used for and what it is used for. J. Zaikowski said the rec committee is not using that money for anything but infrastructure. It has been used recently for leveling a playing field. A contractor was hired to reclaim the outfield at the Rec Field. The yearly request is to cover other expenses. J. Zaikowski said discussion had taken place regarding using the fund for repairs to the pavilion at the Rec Field, bridges at Morse Park, and dugouts at the Rec Field. S. Pilcher was looking for clarification for the annual town meeting warning. P. Low noted that he has donated and others have donated money over years to save the taxpayers money. He noted the town was very lucky to have a very affordable mowing contract. S. Pilcher noted that saving for a future foreseen expense was good planning. M. Kelley asked about giving \$2000 to Bristol Rec and whether Monkton residents were using those funds. J. Zaikowski said Bristol Rec contributes help with the basketball program. He also noted that his child participates in their programming.

There was discussion about delinquent taxes, doing a tax sale, assistant town clerk hours, assistant treasurer, zoning administrator, property maintenance, the building fund, and the highway capital project fund.

J. McNerney moved to approve the 2024 budget as amended subject to adjustments by the Chair for the 2023 general fund deficit and the Zoning Administrator salary. Seconded by W. Crandall . All voted in favor.

2024 TOWN MEETING WARNING

J. McNerney moved to approve the town warning subject to clarification for language on Article 6, and subject to adjustment to numbers of the budget as discussed. W. Crandall seconded. All voted in favor.

SELECTBOARD REPORT

S. Pilcher noted that it was always interesting to go through the minutes and review the year. There was discussion about how many people read the report.

NEW PERSONNEL POLICY REVIEW SECTIONS 1-5

M. Kelley took the Selectboard through the proposed changes and input from Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

TOWN OFFICES DOOR

S. Pilcher said a bid package would be put out. S. Wilbur said he would put it together. P. Low said he will review the bid package.

DOG ORDINANCE CHANGES

The board reviewed one suggested change. There was a discussion on what detail and specifics might need to be in the language to be enforceable. S. Pilcher noted that changing language on the dog ordinance needed to be clear and useful. He noted that there is a state-required process to change an ordinance.

OLD BUSINESS:

none

OTHER BUSINESS:

S. Pilcher noted that the conflict of interest policy included that a recused person cannot participate in the meeting as a member of the board. They can participate as a citizen expressing their concerns.

S. Pilcher noted that the folks at Old Airport Road are thinking about proposing that the town take over the road as a class 4 town road. He said that VLCT has a class 4 road policy. He noted that negotiation continues. J. McNerney asked about timing.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 7:00pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

none required

J. McNerney moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:31 pm. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Demeritt